



North Tees and Hartlepool
NHS Foundation Trust

Salmonella

Information for patients

This leaflet can be made available in other formats including large print, CD and Braille and in languages other than English, upon request.

This leaflet tells you about the salmonella infection which is causing your diarrhoea.

What is salmonella?

Salmonella is a bacterium (germ) which is caused by food poisoning.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms include:

- stomach pain
- headaches
- vomiting (being sick)
- diarrhoea
- tiredness
- fever (high temperature).

How will I know if I have this infection?

Your doctor will ask for a sample of your diarrhoea, which will be tested in the laboratory. The results of the test will show if you have salmonella.

How did I catch salmonella?

You may catch salmonella:

- by eating food that has been infected (in contact) with the germ, for example, undercooked poultry and eggs, unpasteurised milk and raw meat.
- from someone who is infected.

It is likely you have had the germ for 12 - 72 hours before feeling ill.

Can I give it to someone else?

Yes, but this does not happen very often. The most important thing you can do to prevent this is to wash your hands well, using soap and water.

Is there any treatment?

You should:

- drink plenty of fluids so you do not become dehydrated (lack fluid in your body).
- avoid alcohol, tea, coffee and fizzy drinks.
- take a painkiller such as paracetamol if you have any pain. Always follow the instructions provided in the leaflet supplied with your tablets.

Most people get better without treatment, but your doctor will give you antibiotics, if needed.

If you are in hospital you will usually be cared for in a single room and staff looking after you will wear aprons and gloves.

If you are taking the contraceptive pill and you have severe vomiting or diarrhoea you will need to take extra precautions. Ask your doctor if you need any advice.

If you have salmonella your doctor will have to notify the Environmental Health Officer.

Can I go to work or school?

You should stay off work or school until you have had no diarrhoea or vomiting for 2 days and feel well.

You must tell your employer you have had salmonella infection if you work with the elderly, children, those in poor health or if you handle food. An environmental health officer may visit or telephone you to talk about your illness.

How can salmonella be prevented?

You can reduce the chance of catching salmonella by:

- washing your hands well and often, especially after going to the toilet or changing nappies.
- washing your hands before preparing or eating food.
- washing and drying your hands carefully after handling raw meat and poultry.
- keeping raw food at the bottom of the fridge away from cooked food.
- using hot water and detergent when washing up and cleaning chopping boards.
- making sure meat and poultry are properly cooked especially at barbeques.
- washing your hands after contact with animals especially reptiles and amphibians (such as snakes and lizards).
- taking extra care when eating or drinking when travelling abroad.

You should not prepare food for anyone else if you have sickness and diarrhoea.

Do I need to do any special cleaning?

It is important the toilet area is cleaned after use. This should include flush handles, door handles and taps.

Wash all dirty clothes, bedding and towels on the hottest cycle possible.

Contact numbers

If you have any worries or concerns you should contact your GP during normal surgery hours. Outside surgery hours, you should contact your GP's surgery for the Out of Hours Service number.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

Infection Prevention and Control Team

telephone: 01642 383280

Monday - Friday, 8.30am – 4.30pm

Further information is available from:

NHS Choices

telephone: 111 (when it is less urgent than 999)

Calls to this number are free from landlines and mobile phones or via the website at www.nhs.uk

Environmental Health Departments

Stockton Borough Council

telephone: 01642 526575 / 526576

Hartlepool Borough Council

telephone: 01429 266522

Durham City Council
telephone: 0191 3018470

Information used in the development of this leaflet:

Hawker J et al (2012) Communicable Disease Control and Health Protection Handbook. Wiley-Blackwell Publishing. Oxford.

This leaflet has been produced in partnership with patients and carers. All patient leaflets are regularly reviewed, and any suggestions you have as to how it may be improved are extremely valuable. Please write to the Quality Assurance Team, University Hospital of North Tees or email: patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk

Comments, Concerns, Compliments or Complaints

We are continually trying to improve the services we provide.

We want to know what we're doing well or if there's anything which we can improve, that's why the Patient Experience Team is here to help.

Our Patient Experience Team is here to try to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you would like to contact or request a copy of our PET leaflet, please contact:

telephone: 01642 624719

Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 4.00pm

Messages can be left on the answering machine and will be picked up throughout the day.

freephone: 0800 092 0084

Email: patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk

Out of hours if you wish to speak to a senior member of Trust staff, please contact the hospital switchboard who will bleep the appropriate person.

telephone: 01642 617617

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Patient Experience Team is available to discuss your concerns in person Monday – Friday, 1.30pm – 4.30pm. The office is based on the ground floor at the University Hospital of North Tees.

Data Protection and use of patient information

The Trust has developed a Data Protection, Caldicott and Disclosure Policy (IG5) in accordance with the Data Protection Legislation (General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act 2018) and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All of our staff respect this policy and confidentiality is adhered to at all times. If you require further information please contact the Information Governance Team.

telephone: 01642 383551 or email: information.governance@nth.nhs.uk

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